

# THE YALE REVIEW

A NATIONAL QUARTERLY



JANUARY 1921

Germany Since the Revolution . . . . .	<i>The Author of "J'Accuse"</i>
Zionism To-Day . . . . .	<i>Israel Zangwill</i>
A Group of Poems . . . . .	<i>Robert Frost</i>
The Masterful Puritan . . . . .	<i>Agnes Repplier</i>
Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa . . . . .	<i>W. E. Clarke</i>
Religion in England after the War . . . . .	<i>W. R. Inge</i>
Women in the Election . . . . .	<i>A. Maurice Low</i>
An Unknown Poet . . . . .	<i>John Drinkwater</i>
The Permanent Utility of Dialect . . . . .	<i>Brander Matthews</i>
The Shepherds' Field. <i>Verse</i> . . . . .	<i>Edward Bliss Reed</i>
In the Hunger Districts . . . . .	<i>Edith Hoyt</i>
Professional Schools of Liberal Education . . . . .	<i>Archibald MacLeish</i>
Lies and Liars . . . . .	<i>Raphael Demos</i>
The Problem of the American Negro . . . . .	<i>Franz Boas</i>
Some Novels of 1920 . . . . .	<i>Wilbur Cross</i>
Among the New Books . . . . .	

*Edited by* WILBUR CROSS

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JANUARY, 1921

Germany Since the Revolution . . . . .	<i>The Author of "J' Accuse"</i>	225
Zionism To-Day . . . . .	<i>Israel Zangwill</i>	246
A Group of Poems . . . . .	<i>Robert Frost</i>	258
The Masterful Puritan . . . . .	<i>Agnes Repplier</i>	262
Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa . . . . .	<i>W. E. Clarke</i>	275
Religion in England after the War . . . . .	<i>W. R. Inge</i>	297
Women in the Election . . . . .	<i>A. Maurice Low</i>	311
An Unknown Poet . . . . .	<i>John Drinkwater</i>	323
The Permanent Utility of Dialect . . . . .	<i>Brander Matthews</i>	338
The Shepherds' Field. <i>Verse</i> . . . . .	<i>Edward Bliss Reed</i>	349
In the Hunger Districts . . . . .	<i>Edith Hoyt</i>	351
Professional Schools of Liberal Education . . . . .	<i>Archibald MacLeish</i>	362
Lies and Liars . . . . .	<i>Raphael Demos</i>	373
The Problem of the American Negro . . . . .	<i>Franz Boas</i>	384
Some Novels of 1920 . . . . .	<i>Wilbur Cross</i>	396

AMONG THE NEW BOOKS

Mr. Wells's Gospel of History . . . . .	<i>James Harvey Robinson</i>	412
Revolutionized Germany . . . . .	<i>Charles Seymour</i>	418
From a Castle Window . . . . .	<i>Vida D. Scudder</i>	424
Songsters in English Lanes . . . . .	<i>Dallas Lore Sharp</i>	429
The Far East in 1920 . . . . .	<i>W. Reginald Wheeler</i>	431
The Life of a Fighter . . . . .	<i>Louis Howland</i>	435
Admirals, Discreet and Indiscreet . . . . .	<i>William O. Stevens</i>	437
A French View of Poe . . . . .	<i>John Gould Fletcher</i>	444

Robert Frost

to  
Louis Martin

A GROUP OF POEMS

By ROBERT FROST

*Snow Dust*

The way a crow  
Shook down on me  
The dust of snow  
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.

*The Onset*

Always the same when on a fated night  
At last the gathered snow lets down as white  
As maybe in dark woods and with a song  
It shall not make again all winter long  
Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground,  
I almost stumble looking up and round,  
As one who overtaken by the end  
Gives up his errand and lets death descend  
Upon him where he is, with nothing done  
To evil, no important triumph won  
More than if life had never been begun.

Yet all the precedent is on my side:  
I know that winter death has never tried  
The earth but it has failed: the snow may heap  
In long storms an undrifted four feet deep

As measured against maple, birch, and oak;  
It cannot check the Peeper's silver croak;  
And I shall see the snow all go down hill  
In water of a slender April rill  
That flashes tail through last year's withered brake  
And dead weeds like a disappearing snake.  
Nothing will be left white but here a birch  
And there a clump of houses with a church.

*A Star in a Stone-Boat*

Never tell me that not one star of all  
That slip from heaven at night and softly fall  
Has been picked up with stones to build a wall.

Some laborer found one faded and stone cold,  
And saving that its weight suggested gold,  
And tugged it from his first too certain hold,

He noticed nothing in it to remark.  
He was not used to handling stars thrown dark  
And lifeless from an interrupted arc.

He did not recognize in that smooth coal  
The one thing palpable besides the soul  
To penetrate the air in which we roll.

He did not see how like a flying thing  
It brooded ant-eggs, and had one large wing,  
One not so large for flying in a ring,

And a long Bird of Paradise's tail,  
(Though these when not in use to fly and trail  
It drew back in its body like a snail);

Nor know that he might move it from the spot—  
The harm was done: from having been star shot  
The very nature of the soil was hot

And burning to yield flowers instead of grain,  
Flowers fanned and not put out by all the rain  
Poured on them by his prayers prayed in vain.

He moved it roughly with an iron bar,  
He loaded an old stone-boat with the star  
And not, as you might think, a flying car,

Such as even poets would admit perforce  
More practical than Pegasus the horse  
If it could put a star back in its course.

He dragged it through the ploughed ground at a pace  
But faintly reminiscent of the race  
Of jostling rock in interstellar space.

It went for building-stone, and I as though  
Commanded in a dream forever go  
To right the wrong that this should have been so.

Yet ask where else it could have gone as well,  
I do not know—I cannot stop to tell:  
He might have left it lying where it fell.

From following walls I never lift my eye  
Except at night to places in the sky  
Where showers of charted meteors let fly.

Some may know what they seek in school and church,  
And why they seek it there; for what I search  
I must go measuring stone walls, perch on perch;

Sure that though not a star of death and birth,  
So not to be compared, perhaps, in worth  
To such resorts of life as Mars and Earth,—

Though not, I say, a star of death and sin,  
It yet has poles, and only needs a spin  
To show its worldly nature and begin

To chafe and shuffle in my calloused palm  
And run off in strange tangents with my arm  
As fish do with the line in first alarm.

Such as it is, it promises the prize  
Of the one world complete in any size  
That I am like to compass, fool or wise.

*Misgiving*

All crying, "We will go with you, O Wind,"  
The foliage follow him, leaf and stem,  
But a sleep oppresses them as they go,  
And they end by bidding him stay with them.

Since ever they flung abroad in spring,  
The leaves have promised themselves this flight,  
Who now would fain seek sheltering wall,  
Or thicket, or hollow place for the night.

And now they answer the summoning blast  
With an ever vaguer and vaguer stir,  
Or, at utmost, a little reluctant whirl  
That drops them no further than where they were.

I only hope that when I am free,  
As they are free, to go in quest  
Of the knowledge beyond the bounds of life,  
It may not seem better to *me* to rest.

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